

MAY, 1987
Volume 7 No. 5
\$ 1.50

M.A.C.E. JOURNAL

"Devoted Exclusively To The Atari Computer User"



Published by the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Tom Sturza

Over the next few months M.A.C.E. members will have the opportunity to attend General Meetings that will feature Special Topics. Please note that our meetings are now open to members ONLY. (One night "guest memberships" cost \$2). The May 19, 1987 General Meeting will be the M.A.C.E. SIXTH BIRTHDAY PARTY!!!! This meeting will feature DOOR PRIZES (donated by our advertisers), DEMOS of 8-bit and 16-bit software, AWARDS presented to past officers and members, who made significant contributions to M.A.C.E., and refreshments. There will not be any New User classes on this date.

The June 16, 1987 General Meeting theme will be "MEET THE SYSOPS". We are contacting those SYSOPS that run or have run ATARI BBSsystems and asking them to attend this meeting. We hope to introduce these dedicated individuals to our members and have them available for a "Question and Answer" session during the second half of the meeting. This Q & A Session will replace the New User classes.

The September 15, 1987 General Meeting will be our annual ELECTION meeting. Since it is never too early to mention such topics - I will do so now! Being a M.A.C.E. officer requires dedication and finding the time to perform the duties of the position. If you feel that you could serve M.A.C.E. as an officer, please let any of the current officers know. We would like to get the new officer candidates in touch with the people currently holding the positions. An orderly transition from one officer group to the next, is our goal!

- FROM YOUR EDITOR -

R. Charles Sibthorpe

Well it's that time again, time to start considering who your next administration will consist of. Come September we will be holding our annual ELECTION Meeting when new elected officials will take the helm of MACE. As Tom Sturza has indicated, we want an orderly change of command. Due to personal commitments (a return to college) I will NOT seeking a second term as your Editor. I will gladly train/assist the new Editor during the transition period and will always be available to answer question and offer advise.

It would seem that my article last month may have been slightly misleading in that I put some 120 Hrs/wk between MACE and Allen-Bradley. Well I do put in about 60-80 Hrs./wk at Allen-Bradley but I only put in about 40 Hrs./mo for MACE. However, the point I was attempting to get across was there and I thank the members for their response and adherence to the Journal article deadline. As a result I was able to put more time into this issue than for previous issues and the result was a 100% Laser Printed Journal. Let me know how you like it.

Again this month's Journal reads like it was the Journal of an ST SIG or from a 100% ST User's Group. Well the reason is the same as last month, there were no 8-bit articles submitted, with the exception of Hugh McLean and Don Neff. I could not fit their articles in this month, however, their articles will be on a Priority One status for next month. I also ran out of room for Allen P. Bargaen's regular article, Flying the ST. His article will also share the Priority One status for next month.

I will be at the next few General Meetings as my schedule with Ford has shifted and my Tuesdays are now free. So I'll see you there.

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Bring the disk to the monthly General Meeting or send to it to: MACE PO Box 2785, Southfield, Mi. 48037 Attn: Disk Librarian.

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MACE JOURNAL

THE COMPUTER MAGAZINE FOR THE PROGRESSIVE
ATARI USER

TUTORIALS

- 10 BACK ON LINE WITH THE SUPERBOARD ST
The SYSOP of the MACE
Superboard Helps us out again.

SOFTWARE REVIEWS/UPDATES

- 4 TEXTPRO
An ST Word Processor from
Abacus.
- 8 FLASH
ST Terminal Program from ANTIC
Software.
- 15 MILLIONAIRE
How even YOU can become a
MILLIONAIRE!!!
- 17 A-CALC
An ST Spreadsheet imported from
England by ANTIC.
- 19 ZOOMRACKS II
A powerful Database for the
ST. Using Publishing Partner and a
Laser Printer.
- 20 THUNDER!
Batteries Included's newest
Spell Checker for the ST.

PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 7 NEWPROD
New Products for your ST and
'Ole Faithful!

BUSINESS

- 12 MIDWEST ATARI EXPO
A schedule of event of up
coming ATARI Expositions
- 13 ST SIG MINUTES
Minutes of the SIG Meeting by
R. Staff.
- 13 MACE DATES
The dates of our up coming
General Meetings.
- 14 17 MARCH GENERAL MEETING
Minutes of our last General
Meeting.

TEXPRO
by
Neil Randall

COMPUTE!'s Atari ST Disk & Magazine

Textpro
Abacus Software
2201 Kalamazoo S.E.
Post Office Box 7211
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49510
\$49.95

Requirements: Any ST with monochrome or color monitor and a compatible printer.

There are two basic types of word processors. The first -- and until recently the most common -- is the post-formatted word processor. With these programs, you insert nonprinting control characters in your text to tell the printer how to format the document on paper. For example, if you want the title Moby Dick to print in italics, you might insert control characters such as IMoby DickR or whatever is required to make the printer switch from roman type to italics and then back to roman. The control codes appear onscreen, but not on paper. Other control codes might specify underlining, boldface, expanded or condensed characters, subscripts and superscripts, centering, and so on.

The second type of word processor, rapidly gaining popularity, is called what-you-see-is-what-you-get (WYSIWYG). As the name implies, the way the document appears on the screen is how the printer will print it. A word to be printed in italics appears onscreen as italics; a title to be centered on paper is centered on the screen. This approach was popularized on personal computers by the MacWrite word processor for the Apple Macintosh. Since then, users of the Macintosh, Atari ST, Amiga, and -- lately -- the IBM PC are swinging over to the WYSIWYG design, especially as desktop publishing gains ground.

The benefits of the WYSIWYG design

are fairly obvious. The document you see on the screen is the one you will see on paper. The text you work on is not cluttered with control characters; the screen looks more like a page in a typewriter. According to some, however, WYSIWYG has two major disadvantages: It is slower than the post-formatted approach, and it allows less flexibility.

TextPro: A Maverick

Abacus Software has chosen the post-formatted design for its new word processor, TextPro. For those who are used to 1ST Word, the word processor included with the ST, this choice may at first seem disappointing. Many ST owners started with eight-bit computers such as the Atari 400/800/XL/XE or the Commodore 64, on which post-formatted word processors dominate, and they expect great-looking things from their GEM-based ST. WYSIWYG word processors simply look better on the screen than post-formatted word processors, and some people may be tempted to base their evaluation of a program such as TextPro solely on appearance.

What TextPro loses in appearance, however, it makes up for in flexibility. It is GEM-based, but you can choose formatting and editing options using either the mouse or the keyboard. You can define 30 different function keys to automatically type anything you want -- up to 160 characters each. The program can automatically generate a table of contents and an index, highly useful features for those preparing lengthy documents. Other features allow you to link 30 separate files for printing, print up to five columns across the page, and use two-line headers and footers. TextPro even does a reasonable job of automatic hyphenation.

TextPro's numerous features become

apparent with a quick glance at the drop-down menus. The Info selection, usually reserved for author credits, displays how many lines of text you have entered and how much room remains in memory. Under the File menu are such common items as Load, Save, and Delete, but TextPro supplements these with several others, including New and Output. By selecting New, you can erase the text in memory and begin a new file. By selecting Output, you can preview your document by printing to the screen, or print a copy on the printer without first saving the file on disk. This can't be done with some other word processors, such as 1ST Word.

Three Modes Fit All

TextPro has three working modes: Document, Non-Document, and C-Source. The first is the standard word processing mode, which saves your text on disk with all of the formatting codes intact. Non-Document mode lets you save the text in ASCII format for uploading via modem or preparing source code for programming. C-Source mode is designed specifically for C programmers; it automatically indents the braces as required by C. Programmers can also make use of the 30 definable function keys to save typing.

Another selection under the File menu is Function Keys. Here is where TextPro shines. This option opens a dialog box that asks if you want to Alter, Load, or Save the function-key definitions. If you choose Alter, a second box appears, showing the ten function keys and offering a choice between Normal, Shift, or Alternate. Each key can perform three functions, depending on whether it is pressed alone or with Shift or Alt. This yields the total of 30 different definitions, each with up to 160 characters. Frequently used words, phrases, or sentences can be made to appear at the touch of a key.

Many of TextPro's commands can also be assigned to function keys, saving you even more time. All in all, the

function-key system is superb.

Further evidence of the little touches that TextPro's authors have included can be found when you select the Quit option. A dialog box reminds you to save your document and asks if you want to end TextPro or switch to another program. If you choose the latter, the standard GEM file selector appears, with the filename OUTPUT.PRg on the selection line. This lets you move to TextPro's sophisticated Output program effortlessly. A minor convenience, to be sure, but one that shows consideration for the user.

Writing With Style

The Edit menu contains block-manipulation functions (Transfer, Copy, and Erase) and various other options. You can indicate words to be indexed and titles to be included in the table of contents. A placeholder option allows mailing-list merging and other such activities. There's a page-break option, a function to add blank lines, and a command that lets you jump instantly to a specific line in a long document.

The Search and Replace functions, each with submenus, are also accessed from the Edit menu. There's a command to word-wrap the paragraph you're editing (in case the wrapping gets scrambled), and a Sort option for tables and lists. Sort is especially useful when you're preparing an index for printing.

Next is the Style menu. Here are the selections for bold, light, italicized, and underlined printing, plus superscripts, subscripts, and outlining. The special 0-9 characters can be added from the Style menu, and you can switch between 10, 12, and 15 characters per inch. One option lets you switch between upper- and lowercase, and another inserts the system time and date when the document is printed. Like almost all of TextPro's features, these options are accessible with either the mouse or the

keyboard.

The Formatting menu provides such options as Indent Left, Indent Right, Centering, and Justifying. From here you can click Word Wrap and Automatic Hyphenation on and off, set tab stops, and enter Insert mode. Finally, this menu includes the Formats command, which allows you to set paper length, spacing, and headers and footers. Formats can be set up as files of their own, so you can call predesigned formats from disk. It is in Formats, incidentally, that you select the number of columns to print -- up to five.

It's Hardcopy Time

Once you've created your document and chosen the format, you can print it out in two different ways. As mentioned above, the File menu lets you print the document you're currently viewing. But TextPro includes, as well, a separate Output program which allows considerable flexibility in the way your document will appear. This program is completely separate from TextPro.

The Print menu allows you to choose standard horizontal print -- or, if you have an Epson-compatible printer, vertical (sideways) print. You can send the file to the printer or to disk, or save it as a bitmapped representation of the document. The last feature is for use with Abacus Software's TextDesigner package, which allows even more layout and printing flexibility.

Another feature, Output List, lets you link up to 30 files together for printing. When you're typing certain kinds of documents, particularly those with defined sections, it is sometimes easier to do the writing first and then worry about organization. You can break your document into 30 separate files, then join them together at printing time. The output list can be saved on disk for later reference, so you don't have to create it each time you print.

Finally, the Options menu creates the table of contents and the index, provides a mail-merge feature, and allows you to create different printing formats for each file in the output list. The table of contents and index are created from marks you inserted in the text earlier, and they save themselves on disk automatically after the document is printed. At this point, you can return to the main TextPro program, call up the contents or index file, and sort it, edit it, and format it as you wish.

A Few Problems

TextPro comes with printer drivers for Epson compatibles and some other printers. You can set up your own printer driver if your printer has a good manual and you know a great deal about this sort of thing, but Abacus can do its customers a great service by releasing a new version of TextPro, or a separate disk, with more printer drivers.

For this review we used a Star Micronics Gemini 10-X, a fairly popular printer, and we encountered a few problems. Even though the Gemini is supposed to be Epson-compatible, the spacing command in TextPro did not work properly. The problem was solved with a call to Abacus, but the solution is not completely satisfactory. Now, double-spacing works, but the Gemini file is permanently double-spaced, and the Epson driver must be used for single-spacing.

There are a few other minor problems with TextPro. First, there seems to be no way to assign italics or boldface to text in the function-key definitions. More importantly, the formatting option, though flexible, is far from easy to use. Rather than -- or in addition to -- Epson's n/72 command, why not include a box that simply asks for double-spacing?

Similarly, headers and footers are not automatically centered, something usually taken care of by other word

(continued on next page)

NEW PRODUCTS

by Jim Kennedy

When buying any of the following products, please let them know where you saw the information about the product. Also, let them know you're a M.A.C.E. member.

----- 8 Bit -----

"Battlecruiser" (war game)
Strategic Simulations, Inc.
1046 N. Rengstorff Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94043
(415) 964-1353
\$59.95 (48K disk)

This is an advanced war game that is really two games in one. One recreates naval engagements during WWI between Great Britain and Germany. The other simulates WWII surface battles between Britain/France and Germany/Italy. You have a choice of 79 classes of ships in both games. You can also create your own scenarios and ships.

----- 16 Bit -----

"10th Frame" (bowling game)
Access Software, Inc.
2561 South 1560 West
Woods Cross, Utah 84087
\$39.95

Features included in this new release for the ST; Digitized Sound, Scoreboard Printout, Up to 8 Different Players, Including League Play, Automatic Scoring, Power & Hook Control, Special kids level.

"Tackle Box" (Personal Pascal Utility)
SRM Enterprises
P.O. Box 40
USAFA, CO 80840
(303) 472-6624
\$39.95

Tackle Box is compatible with Personal Pascal version 1.11 and lower.

Personal Pascal is by Optimized Systems Software, Inc.. Tackle Box includes; 51 GEMDOS calls, 12 BIOS calls, 39 XBIOS calls, 63 AES calls, 80 VDI calls. Also, over 25 math calls, complete documentation, handy reference material, and the Tackle Box ST Newsletter.

(TextPro concluded)

processors. And TextPro does not provide for footnoting. Depending on your requirements, none of these items may be critical, but they do represent areas that could stand improvement. Some people might also prefer a WYSIWYG version.

Fight Or Switch?

Because most ST owners have 1ST Word, a capable word processor, the first question they ask about a new program is "Should I switch?." The answer depends largely on your word processing demands. If you stick to letters, essays, term papers, and other easily styled documents, 1ST Word may suffice. If you need greater sophistication and flexibility -- particularly when formatting output -- TextPro deserves investigation. Automatic hyphenation, indexing, and tables of contents are highly useful for writers of technical documents, as are the 30 user-defined function keys and the formatting options.

Similarly, the ability to save a bitmapped version of a file to disk for future graphics manipulation will be useful to some, and the output list feature will be of great help to others who work on several parts of a document at the same time.

If you've encountered a need for greater flexibility, consider TextPro. You lose WYSIWYG, but the gains could well make up for the loss.

FLASH

Reviewed by

John Pellet
DAL-ACE

FLASH from Antic Software, is a non-copy protected, GEM of a terminal program! If you want more powers and features than anything else on the market, at a reasonable price, look no farther than FLASH. FLASH is a GEM application that emulates three terminal types, the VT-52, VT-100 (including a remapped keyboard), and Compuserve Vidtex. And it has just about every feature you could possibly think of and more than you'll probably use. As an abbreviated sample:

Data transfers include 2 forms of xmodem file transfer with tight and loose timing, ASCII and DC2/DC4 file transfers, and a large capture buffer. During text transfers you can specify text conversion, data bits, handshaking, and more. Unluckily, Kermit is not supported. Using the Hayes command set, as a default, you can autodial either a single number or a set you specify. Each number can automatically link to a command file which can not only set terminal parameters and perform logon tasks, but fully automate a repetitive sequence of operations, like capturing your mail.

FLASH uses a command language, GEM menus, and keyboard alt commands for almost every option, so you can use whichever you like. Function keys can call each other. A full screen editor is built in so you can edit command files, uploads, or captured text while using FLASH. But, without a doubt the most powerful part of the program is the ability to execute files of commands. For example, a file to automatically logon to the ST BBS might look like:

```
>WA baud|  
>WA Name| Yourname|  
>WA Password| Yourpassword|
```

This means wait for the string "baud" from the host, then send a carriage return to the modem. Then wait for the string "Name:" and send your name and do the same for password. If you wanted to change parity, the default directory on your system, start a capture buffer, or anything else, commands are available. For those of you unlucky enough to be familiar with the IBM world, you may recognize a certain similarity of the above to Crosstalk's script files. Basically they are very similar except FLASH does not support the conditional commands like IF...THEN, WHEN, or JUMP. But what it does support is easier to use in my mind, because you have an editor built in and structure is less strict.

When you combine the command file capability with the auto dial feature with redialing, you get capabilities that are very difficult to find elsewhere. When you add in the operation under GEM, which makes your desk accessories instantly available and imposes a common interface, you get even more power.

It is a real pleasure to find a reasonably (CHEAP!) program that not only does what it says, but does more than commonly seen on other machines. A REAL WINNER!

FLASH is available directly from Antic or from local retailers (I got mine from Computer Discoveries in Dallas.) for under \$40. [editor's Note: The preceeding article was downloaded to the MACE Superboard BBSSystem by the author. Thank you for contributing to the MACE Journal and for calling the MACE Superboard.]

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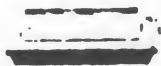
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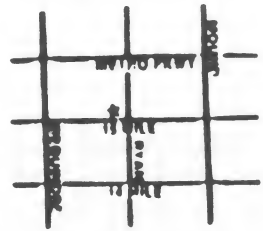
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Back on line with
The MACE SUPERBOARD ST!

This month we can chat about the FILES section that I am sure EVERYONE wants to know about. First lets define a very common terms used in the realm of BBS sysops and users....

----leach----

This is a person who will do nothing on a BBS but hit the -D- (option) and download programs. Never posts messages, never uploads, and NEVER does anything to help the BBS! This type of person I try to keep off the BBS. All they do is waste time and cause the BBS line to be busy when a GOOD user is trying to logon.

To access the files section, all you have to do is select the -F- option at the main menu. This will bring up a directory that will look something like this;

- 1) Atari 8 bit Games
- 2) Atari 8 Bit utility
- 3) Atari 16 Bit games
- 4) Atari 16 Bit utility
- 5) MACE 8 Internal
- 6) MACE 16 Internal

S-Scan all NEW files
L-List all new files
s-scan ALL files
l-List ALL files

At this point you can decide where to go. Just type in the number of the base you wish to look at. If you select the -S- option at this point, then you will get a list of all the new files since last you logged on to the BBS. If you select the -L- option you will get a list, including all the information on that file, of all new files. If you select -s- you will get a list of ALL the files in the system (don't select this unless you have a lot of time to kill). The same goes for the -l- command. So,

lets go to the option 3 (Atari 16 Bit games). Press 3 on your keyboard. You will see something like this...

Current file directory 16 games
Files Cmd(?=help)

Here, hit the return key or the -?- and it will display a menu like this:

- [B] BATCH SEND LIST TOGGLE
- [C] CHOOSE DIR FOR ALL NEW COMMAND
- [D] DOWNLOAD FILE
- [F] FIND FILE
- [K] KERMIT FILE SEND
- [L] LIST FILES
- [M] MARK FILES FOR BATCH SEND
- [O] OTHER FILE DIR
- [Q] QUIT TO MAIN MENU
- [S] SCAN FILES
- [U] UPLOAD
- [W] WIDE DIR LIST
- [Y] YMODEM SEND

Lets take these one at a time....

[B] batch send toggle ---- This turns on or off the batch send (please refrain from using this option unless you know what you are doing!)

[C] choose ---- gives a list of all the file directories, you may turn off the directory that you are not interested in when you want to check all the new files when using either -S- or -L- from the files directory.

[D] Download a file ---- sends a file to you.

[F] Find a file ---- type in part of a file name (ie. if you want to find a file called RAMDISK.ARC you would type in RAM) it will run through all the files and list all the files that have the letters R A M in it!

[K] Kermit send ---- this is for the Kermit style of downloading where it will send more than 1 file at a time

[L] list files ---- this will show

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you the files in the directory including the day, time, size, type, and all other information on the file!

[M] Mark files ---- This is for the batch send. You may mark the files that you wish to download

[O] other dir. ---- Other file directories

[Q] Quit to main menu ---- Guess??
Go to the main menu prompt

[S] Scan files ---- This is the best way to look at the files. Shows the file name and a brief description.

[U] Upload a file ---- Send me a file!!!!!!

[W] Wide listing ---- Shows all files in the directory in a 3 column format. Shows only the file names!!!!

[Y] Ymodem send ---- Sets up the system for this protocol. If you wish to download, you would hit the -D- option. The BBS will show a screen like this....

Enter download filespec: (Type in the file name) Then a screen will show this;

Approx transfer time: 3 min

[A] Ascii Xon/Xoff (this is for text only)

[K] Kermit

[S] Special Atari 8 bit mode (all with the XE,XL computers use this format)

[X] Xmodem (not for the 8 bits!)

[Y] Ymodem

These are the different ways to download from the SUPERBOARD ST. If you are a using either an 800, 800XL, or 130XE then use the -S- option!!! If you are a 520ST or 1040ST, go with the Xmodem unless you prefer one of the others.

Type in your preference and hit the return. The file will only take a few seconds for the BBS to set up! Off ya go!! You have just "leached" a file from the BBS. To Upload....

This is all to easy if you just follow the prompts! Hit the -U- option. It will ask for a file name. Type in the filename. The BBS will ask questions

on the file so just answer them!

The BBS will only allow you to download 5 files for every 1 file that you upload. I never did like to do this to people but, as I mentioned before, I don't tolerate the "leaches" making the BBS busy for others that want to contribute to the BBS!

Have fun

Chuck Norris
MACE Vice-Prez
Sysop-MACE Superboard ST

MIDWEST ATARI EXPO

[The following info was printed in the B.A.S.E. User Group Newsletter, Feb., 1987 issue.]

By Richard Raper: Sec. M.A.E.

B.A.S.E. membership is one of the first to get notification of the "MIDWEST ATARI EXPO", to be held in Chicago, July 25 & 26, 1987, at the Ramada Hotel O'Hare, 6600 N. Mannheim Road, Rosemont, IL. 60018.

This will be the first EXPO held in the Midwest for ATARI users, sponsored by the following User Groups:

B.A.S.E.	BLOOMINGTON, IL.
CLAUG	CHICAGO, IL.
LCACE	WAUKEGAN, IL.
MILATARI	MILWAUKEE, WI.
RACC	ROCKFOR, IL.
SCAT	CHICAGO, IL.
STING	PEORIA, IL.

ST SIG MINUTES

By Richard L. Staff

The ST SIG is a M.A.C.E. Special Interest Group for 16-bit ATARI ST computer owners. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M., at the Southfield Civic Center. The February 3rd meeting was "DEMO NIGHT". It started with demonstrations of digitized animation, showing a couple kissing, followed by two minutes worth of a popular rock tune, digitized thru the ATARI ST (it sounded as good as an AM radio). Public Domain software shown included "The Original Adventure-The Colossal Cave" (a text based adventure game) and "LARN" (a text with graphics adventure game).

A representative from Software Trends (a local computer retail store) gave overviews and brief demonstrations of "Word Writer ST" and "Swift Calc ST" from Timeworks, and "Ogre" (a futuristic tank warfare board game on the computer) from Origin Systems, Inc. A Mr. Fox (an ST user) showed a couple of programs he had created using OSS's "Personal Pascal". One was a dialog generator and the other was a disk librarian utility.

Fred Kandah (ST SIG Chairperson) demonstrated a new BASIC language from Germany. "GFA BASIC" appears to bring the power of the ATARI ST to the user with a set of understandable commands. It follows the newer BASICs available for IBM PC's, that is, it is highly structured. It has no line numbers, allows only one command statement per line, has procedure calls, and offers a handful of structured loop commands. Paul Wheeler (ST SIG and M.A.C.E. Membership Chairman) and Chuck Norris (M.A.C.E. Vice President and ST BBS SYSOP) made announcements at the February meeting. Paul mentioned that Batteries Included will donate four programs for the M.A.C.E. birthday party meeting. Chuck ran through a list of product announcements that included modems,

RAM-chips, magazine subscriptions, "MAGIC SAC" (an Apple Macintosh emulator), and others.

The March 3rd meeting was another "DEMO NIGHT". Richard Staff (ST SIG Corresponding Secretary) demonstrated "dEMAN" and "Ogre". "dEMAN" is a full relational database manager for the ATARI ST, with a procedural language that is highly "dBASE III" compatible. "Ogre" was shown again to help people get the flavor of the tactical battle situations this game presents (Rick is an all-nighter "Ogre" fanatic). Vic Farkas (ST SIG Meeting Coordinator) demonstrated "Harrier Strike Mission" - fly the skies of the Falkland Islands in a fighter jet that can hover!!!

Steve Mileski (former ST SIG Meeting Coordinator) announced that a new ATARI ST (only) User Group was forming. G.L.A.S.S. (Great Lakes ATARI ST Support) will meet the 1st Thursday of each month, from 6 to 9 P.M., at the Athens High School, in Troy, Michigan.

M.A.C.E. DATES 1987

General Meetings	Officers Meetings
-----	-----
June 16	June 5
July 21	July 10
August 18	August 7
Sept. 15	Sept. 4
October 20	October 9
November 17	November 6
December 15	December 4

ALL meetings are held at the Southfield Civic Center. 10 1/2 Mile Road & Evergreen. Starting time 7:30 P.M.

17 MARCH 87 GENERAL MEETING

The March meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by President Tom Sturza who announced that the meeting was open to paid members only. Non-members were informed that they could purchase a "Guest Membership" for \$2 at the door which would be good for this meeting only and would include a complimentary issue of the MACE Journal.

Tom announced that another local Atari user group (MAGIC) has decided to negotiate with Atari to hold an AtariFest as MACE will not be doing so. Mike Lechkun, a MAGIC member, spoke for a few moments to verify the news and requested that interested persons contact MAGIC to volunteer support. MACE will consider acquiring booth space when relevant information becomes available however MACE will not be financially involved in the endeavor.

The \$1000 check, received from Atari after the 'Taricon II deadline, was deposited in the MACE treasury. An accounting of expenses to date for MACE's efforts to produce the festival totaled \$280. This amount was deducted from the \$1000 check and a MACE check was drawn for the difference and returned to Neil Harris of Atari via registered mail.

Chris Samuels, Meeting Coordinator, demonstrated MACE Library Disk P19, a collection of Koala Pic files (approx. 20), all based on a Star Trek theme.

A member proposed that MACE advertise the monthly meetings in the Detroit News and Free Press. Tom responded that it seemed like a good idea and would be discussed by the officers at the next meeting.

Another member requested the return of guest speaker Erick Wujcik, a writer for the Detroit News. Tom announced that Erick is the proposed guest speaker at the MACE Birthday Party in May but has

not been confirmed at this time.

Chris announced that he is trying to assemble an Intermediate User Sig that will meet regularly during the second half of the monthly general meetings and that the proposed topic during the April meeting would be SpartaDOS by ICD.

Tom took "volunteers" from the audience to play a game of "Wheel of Fortune" that he had downloaded from Compuserve. Tom noted that he had permission of the author, Warren Silberstein, to place the disk in the MACE Library.

Tom announced he had been informed that some computer stores in the area are selling Atari products at a very good price but that the warranty is being sold as an "option" for additional \$\$\$\$. Tom noted that all Atari products come with a 90 warranty by the manufacturer and advised that anyone purchasing such equipment should make sure that the warranty papers are in the box before leaving any store.

Chris showed a video tape he had made of a graphics/music disk called "Compy Shop."

The drawing for the Printer Raffle was held at 8:30. Don Neff won the Gorilla Banana, Fred Green won the Atari 825, and Al Hureski won the BMC. There were 134 tickets sold.

Chris announced that he would be demonstrating EXPRESS! the terminal program for 8-bit Ataris, by Keith Ledbetter at the next meeting which will be held on April 21 in the Southfield Civic Center. The meeting then adjourned for meetings of both 8-bit and ST New User Forum.

Mike Olin
MACE Rec. Sec'y 3/19/87

MILLIONIAIRE

A review by
Gordon Totty

Hi! Remember me? I'm the person that paraded his/her lack of investing skills by admitting that he wouldn't have paid \$11.50 a share for Atari stock, which the last time I looked was selling for over DOUBLE that figure. (I must face it; Tramiel knows more than me and he'll always be richer.) Well, I'm back to tell you about my latest software acquisition, which has saved me from myself. I am now a stock market wizard, first class. Why, just tonight I made over \$25,000 in a few simulated weeks in the simulated market! Soon, on paper, make that on disk, I will be rich beyond the wildest dreams of the Pharaohs. My self-esteem has been made whole again. All this thanks to Blue Chip Software!

Unfortunately, I have only seen Millionaire advertised for sale in mail order listings, and that is how I bought it. With apologies to those merchants who advertise in our Journal, I will not allow a merchant to order something for me. If it must be ordered, I believe I might as well do it myself. I do not order by mail for the small price advantage. I prefer to buy from a local software vendor, and Basic Bits 'n Bytes and Canton Computer have received a lot of money from me, as well as Sector One International. I live nearest to Canton Computer and spent so much there that Basic Bits 'n Bytes merged with them just to get my extra business. When I have decided I want a product, and I have the money, I want it NOW!!! (No need to point out to me that this is immature; I know it is.) If it is on the shelf, I'll take it. If you have to order it for me, I believe I can do it faster myself, and don't want the extra delay. Sorry, because I would really rather see it on local shelves.

Blue Chip Software is published by Britannica Learning Corporation. They publish five simulations that I know of:

Millionaire (stock market), Tycoon (commodities market), Baron (real estate), Squire (financial planning), and Managing for Success (business). Only Millionaire and Tycoon have been released for the Atari. List prices are around \$60 for IBM and Macintosh, \$50 for Apple II, \$30 for Commodore, and \$19.95 for us kids with the "toys". According to the sales literature, these programs were once reviewed very favorably by TIME magazine. I certainly am not about to disagree with TIME; I am enjoying the stock market simulation.

First, you may know about me and packaging. If not, I have previously reported that I am a sucker for a good package. That's what life is all about, you know, having a good wrapper. Substance with appearance is always worth a few bucks more than plain, old, white-box substance. The wrapper didn't hook me this time because I couldn't see it in the ads, but it was a pleasant surprise. About three quarters the size of a record album. Well padded plastic, with a grain appearance. Thick. Substantial. Solid black. Gold lettering. The instruction book has a shiny gold cover, with black lettering. Nice. Remind\$ one of money, somehow. Millionaire\$\$\$\$\$\$\$. Too bad the sub-title is "The Stock Market Simulation", and not "The Game of Rapacious Greed and Money Lust."

The first, and I believe only, unpleasant surprise comes when you boot the disk (with Basic installed). After you tell it that you are a new player, not seeking to reload a saved game, you get the most unusual announcement I have ever experienced. You get told that you will wait fourteen minutes for loading, setup, initialization, or whatever they called it. Let me share my first experience with this, just about the way it happened to me. Punching keys,

waiting to see what's going to entertain me, hit return again, "Hold it! What did I just read? It couldn't have said 14 minutes, must have been 1.4!" Drive very busy. Wait. Drive churning away. Screen black. Wait. It's been over 1.4 minutes. Screen black. Wait. "Gordo, old boy, it have said 14 minutes. Who the hell ever heard of announcing one point four minutes. They would have said 'about a minute and a half' if that was the time." Silence. Screen black. Silence. Panic. "The damn disk is defective and has caused a lock up!!!" Silence. Silence. "What was that? My God, the screen has gone into the attract mode. What should I do, reboot?" Silence.

Wait, folks, wait. They really meant it. It took a full fourteen minutes to initialize! I propose a contest. I believe I have a world's record here; can anyone name a commercial software package for the Atari that tops it?

Now that you have been warned, should you buy this product allow for the fourteen minutes. You could boot the disk, go out for dinner, then play the game. Do anything except sit at the monitor and sweat, the way I did the first time.

Reloading a saved game is also slow, but much faster than fourteen minutes. I did not time it, but would describe the reload procedure as requiring a couple of minutes.

There is no graphic zip to this thing. It is business-like. No nonsense. White print on blue background. But it does not need colors, fancy fonts, pictures, sounds, etc. It works the way it is.

Here is what you do in Millionaire:
Invest and/or speculate, starting with \$10,000. Your objective is to make a million dollars in the stock market.

Buy on margin at 18% interest.
Trade in options.

Borrow against your net worth.
Follow 15 stocks in five industry groups.

Evaluate financial news bulletins, and act on them as you judge proper.

Pay commissions. Pay taxes.

Start at week 14 and go to week 91, where the game ends if you have not terminated it earlier.

Study any of 21 different graphs of price movements over the simulated weeks.

Watch your net worth rise or fall and try to maximize your gains.

Read corporate histories for background (about one screen or less each).

View your portfolio and transaction reports.

Imagine yourself to be a Wall St. Wonder!

The instruction manual is brief and clear. The simulation sounds much more complicated than it really is. You will be using and enjoying it at your first sitting.

This game is marketed as educational software, and I have learned from it. Additionally, I am aware of at least one eighth grade class that would enjoy exposure to it and a chance to work with it for a while. Unfortunately for them, their classroom is equipped by Apple so I cannot help.

I can highly recommend Millionaire if you are interested in the stock market, particularly in view of its bargain price. Where else can you feel like a millionaire for less than twenty bucks?

If you have more patience than me you might even get one of our advertisers to order it for you.

Now, stop reading this drivel (that, indeed, is my literary style) and turn to Flying The ST, a regular column that I have been enjoying since the April 1986 issue. You are cleared for take off.

A-CALC:
A GEM Spreadsheet
for the ST

Reviewed by

Tim Ekdom

A-Calc is a non-copy protected, light-duty spreadsheet imported from England and published by Antic Publishing. A-Calc does not have macros or report-generating capabilities and its size is rather small, but it does have a very nice and thorough implementation of the GEM user interface. Its maximum size is 512 cells high by 256 cells wide and each cell takes a minimum of 10 bytes of memory.

When you first run A-Calc, you are presented with a window open to an empty spreadsheet and several icons on the desktop. You can begin entering data and formulas into the new spreadsheet by pointing and clicking at the desired cells. Each time you begin typing in a cell, an edit window opens. You select whether your entry is a formula, a value, or text. The edit window can be a little annoying if it happens to open up right over the part of the spreadsheet you're working in. You have to take a couple of seconds to move the window to a different location.

Cells can be duplicated across rows or down columns by pointing, clicking, and moving. A "dialogue" box opens to ask the range of the desired duplication and whether formula cell references need to be adjusted. Rows, columns, and cells can be easily inserted or deleted and column widths can be adjusted just by redefining the cell boundaries or "dragging." A group of cells can be treated as a block and positioned in the same manner. Pointing and clicking at a cell will display its contents.

Spreadsheets can be loaded either by menu or by positioning the disk icon over the spreadsheet icon. My personal

opinion is that the icons are redundant, since they don't perform any operations that aren't included in the menus. However, they really don't get in the way. A-Calc uses its own format for spreadsheet files, but it can also load and save files in DIF[erent] formats. In addition to a full complement of mathoperators and functions, A-Calc has several additional features. "Switches" such as display of cell status, cell protection, auto-recalculation, numerical display, text display, etc. can be reset under the "Options" menu. A "Split" option opens up a second window. This is handy for displaying row labels in one window while scrolling across the spreadsheet in the other window. A "View" option selects a smaller character font and displays more of the spreadsheet in the open window. Strangely, with this option selected, it displays more information with a medium resolution color monitor in use than with a monochrome monitor.

Printing capabilities are limited to printing the spreadsheet and the formulas in the cells. Sideways printing is not supported, so if the spreadsheet width exceeds printer width, the remainder is printed on the next page. You can alter the printer configuration file to print in condensed mode to get more of the sheet on one page. Also, you can create your own printer configuration file for non-supported printers if you know the appropriate control codes. There is a sub-program which creates/edits the configuration file.

In summary, A-Calc works well within its limited capabilities. I could not get the program to crash once. It appears to have been well thought out and

evidences craftsmanship in its programming. If you need a light-duty spreadsheet and enjoy working with the GEM interface, you will probably be pleased with A-Calc. There is no tutorial program and the documentation is quite sparse, but you don't really need much for a GEM program. There is no explanation of error messages, and I did get one when attempting to enter a long formula. But I eventually figured out on my own that I needed to increase the cell width. If you already know a little about spreadsheets, A-Calc is easy to get up and running without getting bogged down in the documentation.

ATTENTION

The ST SIG's game disk should **NOT** be Write Protected. The Checkers program will **NOT** run on a protected disk. The Program writes out to the save move file.

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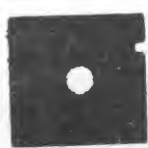


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Reviewed by
Allen P. Bargen

Program price
\$120.00 US

Zoomracks II, the movie

Zoomracks II by QuickView Systems

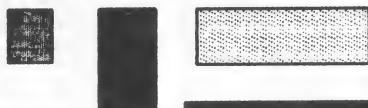
OK, so it isn't a movie, but it is one heck of an upgrade to what is quickly becoming a very popular productivity tool.

Some of you may recall that *Zoomracks* was one of my picks for worthwhile programs shortly after it was released for the ST. While that is still true, this version of the database is a much improved one.

If you have a need for a database, but have never used one, then **ZOOMRACKS II** may just be for you. Most databases tend to be a bit on the incriminating side. I am pleased to tell you that **ZOOMRACKS II** is an excellent example of a program written to help users manage information in a unique and flexible manner.

The program is supplied on one single sided disk that is not protected, and I congratulate QuickView Systems for that concession to their users. Too often, a vital disk is destroyed for whatever reason, and a delay while waiting for a replacement renders the program useless. I'm not sure why that happens to single copy disks, but I think it has

something to do with mountain climbing in Peru.



ZOOMRACKS II can best be described as an 'imagination tool'. It allows the user to create databases and manipulate them in any number of ways. This remake of the program offers a variety of new features. Among them, the ability to import Degas pictures to enhance your data.

You may also now format reports according to your personal tastes, and a math function has also been added.

For those of you who have never used **ZOOMRACKS II** the program is best described as a Multi-function utility. It allows you to create a Relational Database, use a word processor, do mail merge, arithmetic functions, display Degas files, do report formatting and a variety of other support functions.

ZOOMRACKS II does all of this in a creative way. We are all familiar with the concept of file cards used to store information. This utility actually stores any

number of these cards in 'racks'. Each rack holds multiple cards and each card is a unique storage device for the data you place on it. Any card can be called from a rack for review, updating, or use with the mail merge option for instance.

But I HATE Databases and who doesn't? Take heart though! QuickView Systems provided one of the nicest and easiest to use manuals I have seen. In addition to that, they provide an outstanding demonstration on disk to help you learn the system, a much improved version of the former one.

Over the past year or so, **ZOOMRACKS** has developed a cult following of sorts that attest to the popularity of the program. These people create useful templates, and macros for a wide variety of uses that are now being packaged as accessory packages, marketed at about \$20 US. Each contains about 35+ templates and macros for instant use. Many such disks are anticipated as users discover the real power of this program.

Need a database that's easy and fun to use? Buy this one, you will not be disappointed.

-- THUNDER --

by
Mark Skapinker

Batteries Included, \$39.95
An ST Series software Review
by Dave St. Martin

According to a recent magazine article 94% of "home" computer users cite word processing as the primary use of their machines. Certainly my home is no different from the users surveyed. In conjunction with word processing I've used the spelling checkers available for Atari 8-bit computers in the past. Although these spelling utilities got the job done, they were a hassle to use.

I frequently reserved their use only for larger, more complex documents. Their main drawback was the rather prolonged length of time spent in referencing a somewhat limited dictionary. My disdain for spelling checkers due to the time they consumed is well evidenced in past issues of the (FR)ANTIC newsletter. As the novelty of the 8-bit spell checkers wore off, I found myself of the growing opinion that 1.) "there's got to be an easier way....", and 2.) there's no excuse for 'speeling' errors in word processed documents. Enter THUNDER!(tm) the Writers' Assistant for the Atari ST Series from Batteries Included.

- The Accessory Version -

There are several aspects which set this program apart from other utilities of this type. Let's focus on the spell-checker accessory file first. My concerns with time consumed by previous spelling utilities vanished the first time I used this gem of a utility (pun intended). The accessory version of THUNDER!(tm) sits in the background as you type using any GEM based application. On detecting a word that does not match with those in its dictionary a bell is sounded. A couple options then become available. If you know the word is

spelled correctly and simply not in the dictionary, you may continue to type without any untoward effect. You may also elect to re-type gross spelling errors through the usual editing features the application being used at the time. Should you desire assistance, simply move the mouse pointer to the 'Desk' option in the upper left corner of the desktop and choose THUNDER!(tm). The accessory opens a window and allows you to perform your choice of actions; A list of possible replacement words is found in a scrollable window. Replacement of the word is as simple as clicking on the correctly spelled word. The window vanishes and the cursor back spaces and replaces the misspelled word with the word 'clicked' on. The manual makes the mention of the fact that there are problems if the replacement involves backspacing over Tab characters, although I didn't test this. This is a minor deficiency that could grow in significance if you frequently work with tabular data. You may also elect to 'TEST' a word by typing it in for comparison against the dictionary references. Other options include the ability to add a word to one of the three lexicons if the word is determined to be spelled correctly but not present in the comparison list. More on the dictionaries later. Believe me, it's use is a breeze, and defines the essence of the ST machines in the terms of ease of use.

- The Stand-alone Version -

What if your favorite word processor is not GEN based such as ST-Writer(tm), or (ulp!), The Final Word(tm)? As previously mentioned, the accessory version of THUNDER(tm) ONLY works with GEM-oriented programs, but the author didn't forget the "throw-backs". There is a stand-alone version of the program

on the same disk as the accessory version and the two share the same dictionaries.

This program works well with ASCII text in much the same fashion as the older 8-bit spell-checkers albeit much faster (80 words per second from RAM-Disk/40 words per second from microfloppy). The checker itself IS GEM-based and allows mouse oriented editing, in a process that I've grown very accustomed to. Click on the correctly spelled word in the window and it's off to the races! You may also change all occurrences of the word, or elect to ignore all repetitions of the same word. Should the word be of the type not listed in the dictionary, a click on the 'NEXT' option continues checking words within the file. Abandoning checking at anytime is permitted with the original file remaining intact. As with the accessory version, the stand alone version permits direct addition of words to any of the three dictionary files that THUNDER!(tm) uses.

- Dictionaries -

I've found the dictionaries that accompany THUNDER(tm) to be reasonably complete. However, as with all programs of this type there are words that are frequently used that are not found in the dictionary files provided. One frequent omission that I have detected in using THUNDER!(tm) is the absence of contractions such as the words "we'll", "I'll", etc. I've simply added these to the Main dictionary as I encountered them, but I believe it would be relatively easy for the program to check all before the apostrophe and then compare all appearing after the apostrophe against the standard suffixes.

There are three separate dictionaries for reference: The Main dictionary consists of approximately 50,000 words. This is an increase of about 20,000 words over what the 8-bit spelling checkers provide. The main dictionary may be expanded by about 2,000 additional words but may not be edited at a later date, as a result words for

inclusion in this dictionary should be chosen carefully.

The Supplementary dictionary is best used for type specific terms and holds approximately 200 additional words. I've created a supplementary dictionary consisting of computer terminology (which is surprisingly scarce in the existing dictionaries) for use in checking newsletter articles. The supplementary dictionary may be optionally loaded at any time or the base program may be configured to automatically load whichever supplementary dictionary on booting. A minor limitation as I see it is that you may only use one supplementary dictionary at a time. Editing of the supplementary files is as simple as editing with your regular word processor - it's a breeze.

The last of the dictionary files is not a dictionary file in true sense. The "Learn" file is a file that will perform word substitutions automatically. This is ideal for commonly misspelled words such as "receive". Type it incorrectly and Wham! THUNDER!(tm) strikes and the word is corrected without prompts. The expansion of abbreviations into the full spelling is another possibility. Imagine writing a letter in a form of shorthand but ending up with a fully detailed letter. Time savings is what this program is all about.

A third function of THUNDER!(tm) is a statistical analysis of the text file itself. Two fairly standard points of reference may be calculated. Gunning's Fog Index and Flesch's Index both assess the level of reading comprehension required in terms of years of schooling.

In addition, character, syllable, word, sentence, paragraph and carriage return count is provided. The analysis was performed rapidly on the files I used for testing this feature. Though not essential, this feature illustrates the thoroughness which exists throughout this package.

Installation is as easy as copying

the files over to your working disk. The dictionaries may be placed in a folder and the folder name specified in the "config" file. Either of the base programs must be in the root directory. All files are provided on a single non-protected microfloppy disk. A page-and-a-half of last minute additions to the documentation are also provided, as is a clock-set desk accessory.

- Other Considerations -

Double checks and verifies are present throughout THUNDER!(tm). A simple click makes them unobtrusive and they greatly aid in the initial sessions with this application. The accessory version consumes 125K of RAM. While this might be considered to be negligible on the 1040ST, owners of the 520ST certainly would want to consider removing other desk accessories in conjunction with THUNDER!(tm). The manual consists of 53 pages in the new Batteries Included "paperback" style. The manual sections and layout are clear, concise, and easy to follow. There's a detailed Table of Contents but no Index, however I've found no need for one to date. Batteries Included has consistent history of update support following the purchase of their software and I'm sure that this product will be no exception to their current policy.

- The Bottom Line -

Batteries Included has done it again. This is clearly a useful package that has wormed its way onto all my word processing disks. I have yet to discover any bugs or serious draw backs to THUNDER!(tm). It's worth far more than the \$39.95 list price and I'd strongly recommend buying it to anyone with an ST.

A final aside: BUY THE PROGRAM. The only way quality companies such as Batteries Included can stay in business is through the support of the users. They've clearly supported the Atari at prices that make owners of other machines cry. Return the consideration.

The Final Word trademark of Mark of the Unicorn.

THUNDER! is a trademark of Batteries Included, 30 Mural St., Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 1B5, Canada.

Dave St. Martin is a member of the U.S. Army, and currently the President of the Alamo Area Atari User's Association in San Antonio, Texas. He also functions as SYSOP of the Gargoyle BBS and is a frequent contributor to (FR)ANTIC the newsletter of the A.A.A.U.A. For more information or exchange copies of (FR)ANTIC write to Editor, (FR)ANTIC Newsletter, % 3203 Coral Grove Dr., San Antonio, TX 78247.

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